

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-22 (Canceled)

23. (New) A surface treated steel sheet for a battery case, comprising:

a steel sheet having two surfaces, one of said two surfaces to be used as the inner surface of the battery case and the other of said two surfaces to be used as the outer surface of the battery case;

a diffusion layer of a nickel-cobalt-phosphorus alloy formed as an uppermost layer at said one of said two surfaces to be used as the inner surface of the battery case;

an iron-nickel diffusion layer between said diffusion layer of a nickel-cobalt-phosphorus alloy and said steel sheet;

a nickel layer formed as an upper layer at said one of said two surfaces to be used as the outer surface of the battery case; and

an iron-nickel diffusion layer between said nickel layer and said steel sheet.

24. (New) The surface treated steel sheet for a battery case according to claim 23, further comprising a nickel layer formed as an intermediate layer between said diffusion layer of a nickel-cobalt-phosphorus alloy and said iron-nickel diffusion layer.

25. (New) The surface treated steel sheet for a battery case according to claim 23, wherein in the diffusion layer of a nickel-cobalt-phosphorus alloy, the cobalt content is within a range from 5 to 30% by weight and the phosphorus content is within a range from 1 to 12% by weight in the nickel-cobalt-phosphorus alloy.